

June 2, 2003

I. CALL TO ORDER

Finance Chairperson, Katrina Murray, called a Finance and Facilities Committee of the Whole Meeting of the School Committee to order in the committee room at city hall, at 6:35 p.m., to discuss the FY04 budget.

II. ROLL CALL

Present were Ms. Cardoso, Ms. Harris, Alderman O'Donovan (arrived 6:45 p.m.), Ms. Bauer, Mr. Sullivan (arrived 7:00 p.m.), Ms. Taylor, Mr. Murray, and Ms. Rossetti.

Mayor Gay was absent.

Dr. Albert F. Argenziano, Superintendent of Schools, Ms. Marie B. Ferrari, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Administration, Mr. Anthony C. Caliri, Human Resources Manager, Dr. Steven F. Jenkins, District Administrator for Student Services and Mr. Joseph L. Tringale, Assistant Comptroller were also present, along with approximately twenty five members of the audience.

III. FY04 Budget Discussion

Ms. Murray welcomed the audience and then invited Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Argenziano, to give an overview of what will be discussed this evening regarding the FY04 Budget.

Dr. Argenziano briefly went over discussion that took place at the last Finance and Facilities Committee meeting. Mayor Gay and the Chief Financial Officer gave the school committee a bottom line budget figure of \$46.2 million. Dr. Argenziano advised that this is \$5.8 million less than we had a year ago and \$4 million less than we had anticipated of level funding at \$50.2 million. Dr. Argenziano, as he said before, stated the core group of things that are important to us are being able to offer full day Pre-Kindergarten, full day Kindergarten, small class size, small schools, a structured curriculum, a new reading series, a new math series, and day care until 6:00 p.m. The Superintendent reported that from the \$5.8 million, administration has brought the total savings to \$3.9 million (severance plan \$1 million; lay-offs in agreement with the Somerville Administrators Association \$1 million; operations budget - cut \$1.9 million). He and his staff have been working on the organization for over three weeks. Mr. Caliri and Mr. Tringale prepared for tonight's meeting, a staffing reduction analysis FY04 budget information packet. The Superintendent informed the members and the community that Administration will be presenting the operations part of the budget to the committee tomorrow evening, June 3^d. He then turned the meeting over to Mr. Caliri.

Mr. Caliri introduced Mr. Joseph Tringale, and thanked him for being present this evening to share in the presentation of the FY04 budget discussion. Before beginning the presentation, Mr. Caliri let the community know that the school committee has not yet voted on a bottom line FY04 budget, however, administration did put together an organization that is reflective of a bottom line of approximately \$46.2 million. Under the direction of Dr. Argenziano, he and his team made some very difficult decisions to arrive at this figure. Mr. Caliri then proceeded with an overview of the twenty four page staffing reduction analysis FY04 budget information handed out this evening. He explained in order to arrive at the FTE cuts, he compared the total 2002-03

III. FY04 Budget Discussion (cont.)

organization with this organization (the document provided) which is close to \$46.2 million. Mr. Caliri outlined the first three pages for school committee members and members of the audience as follows:

- 2002-2004 Budget Reduction Summary \$46,400,000. (\$200,000 over the \$46.2)
- Summary of Projected Salary Reductions (Category/FTE's/Average Salary/ Reductions)
- 2003-2004 Projected Enrollment (Based on Principals May 1, 2003)
- Summary of Changes 2002-2003 to 2003-2004

Mr. Caliri also discussed the number of staff reductions/additions for each individual school building, as well as the departments, i.e., reading, art/music, library, etc. Mr. Tringale explained the process that would take place if we had to cut \$200,000. from the \$46.4 million to bring us to the \$46.2 budget figure.

When complete with the presentation, lengthy discussion followed. Dr. Argenziano and Mr. Caliri responded to questions asked by school committee members and addressed any concerns they had.

Ms. Murray asked, near the close of the meeting, if the committee would like to take a vote on a bottom line budget figure to submit to the Board of Aldermen. The members felt there were still unanswered questions and more discussion should take place. The operations part of the budget will be discussed at tomorrow evening's Finance and Facilities Committee of the Whole meeting. Combining the information received at both meetings, the committee would consider taking a vote at the June 3rd Finance and Facilities Committee of the Whole meeting. Alderman O'Donovan suggested that the committee also take a vote on a supplemental budget and to include with it a prioritized list of how the money would be distributed.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m., by voice vote.

Dr. Albert F. Argenziano
Secretary